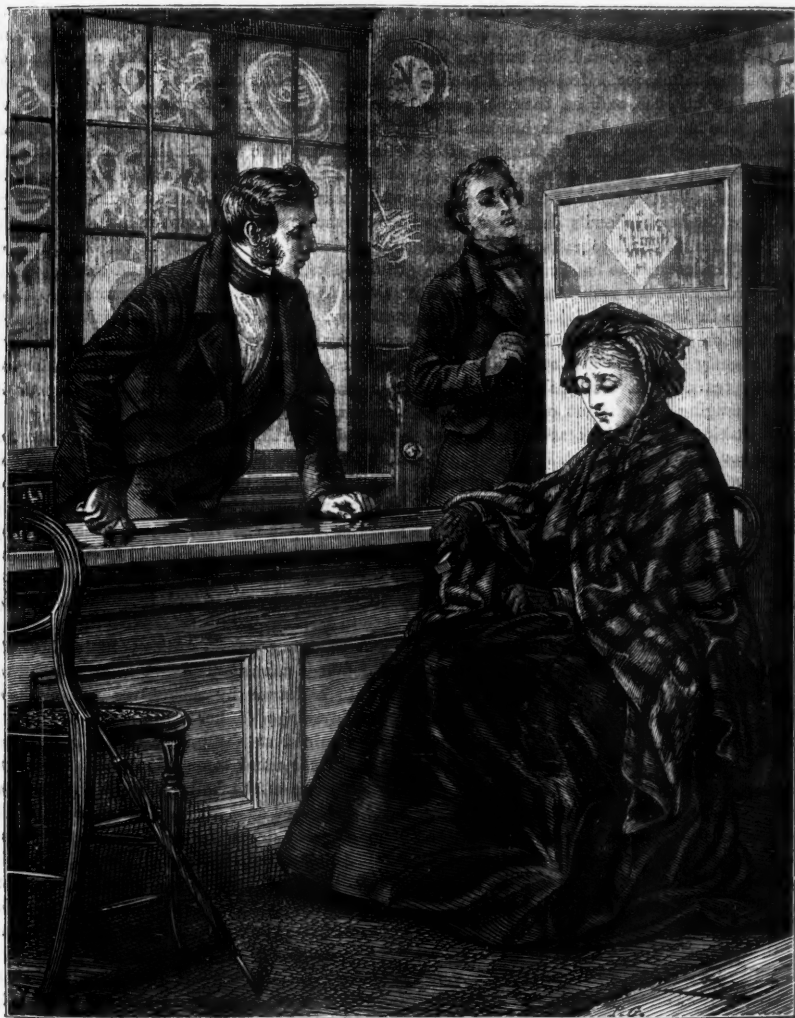


THE QUIVER

Saturday, August 3, 1872.



"A sort of bewilderment came over me"—p. 631.

TWO STORIES IN ONE.

BY WILLIAM GILBERT, AUTHOR OF "DE PROFUNDIS," "SHIRLEY HALL ASYLUM," ETC.

CHAPTER XXXV.—THE LOCK OF HAIR.

AFTER Alice had quitted the public-house she proceeded rapidly homewards, feeling as she went the same impossibility of speaking she had experienced in the inquest-room. It left her, how-

ever, as soon as she entered the house. "Ah! may God pity me and pardon me for what I have done! I could not bear witness against my husband," were the first words she uttered.

She then remained in the room for more than an hour, expecting Morgan's return. When he arrived she addressed him in a calm tone of voice—

"Morgan, I have this day risked my soul to save your life. You must now do what I tell you. I wish to follow my poor boy to the grave, and I cannot do that in your company. Here are nine shillings for you, it is every farthing I have in the world. Now go down to the job you've got, and don't return till I've recovered my mind, for I feel as if I should go mad. Pray go at once, and let there be peace between us." She then placed in his hands a few things she had collected together, and Morgan, without offering the least opposition, or saying a word, left the house.

A short time after her husband's departure, Alice put on her bonnet and shawl to call on her friend Mrs. Watkins. The latter, who had just heard of the death of the child and the result of the inquest, caught poor Alice in her arms and kissed her affectionately, and when she had released her the two women stood silently looking at each other till Alice's eyes filled with tears. Mrs. Watkins then saw the necessity for changing the current of her friend's thoughts, and asking her to be seated, she helped her to take off her bonnet and shawl.

"It is all over," Alice said at last. "I suppose you have heard of the coroner's inquest?"

"Yes, my dear, and the verdict too," said Mrs. Watkins, casting a scrutinising glance on Alice, who evidently understood her meaning. "And now tell me," continued her friend, "can I help you in any way? If I can, I will do it with pleasure."

"You can indeed," replied Alice; "and without you I don't know what I should do. I wish to save my poor boy the disgrace of a parish funeral, and yet I haven't a shilling in the house. Could you lend me a little money? I will repay it in a short time. Morgan is in good work at Uxbridge, and I've no doubt will keep steadily at it, for he has learnt a good lesson," she continued, significantly, "not to go to the public-house again. And I will say, when he's sober, he's as honest, hardworking a man and as good a husband as ever lived."

"Well, I hope what you say may prove true," said Mrs. Watkins. "The money you shall have, and welcome, if three pounds will be enough. We've only a few shillings more than that in the house, and it will take a week to get more from the savings-bank."

"That will be plenty," said Alice, gratefully; "and I promise you the first money I get, you shall have it back."

"I'm not afraid of you," said Mrs. Watkins. "Pay it back at your leisure. Now, will you have a cup of tea?"

"No, thank you," said Alice; "I'd better go back now. But if you'd come round to-morrow and help me a little in getting my mourning ready, it would be very kind of you."

Mrs. Watkins having promised to do so, Alice left her, and proceeded at once to the shop of an undertaker who lived near, and arranged with him for a very modest and inexpensive funeral. She had still enough money left to buy herself some decent mourning, and with a few shillings over in her pocket, she returned home.

Alice that night, as on the previous one, attempted to pray beside the body of her child, but it was useless. She felt conscious that her supplications were not heard, or at least not answered. She tried to put more earnestness into her prayers, but she still felt they were not accepted. This disturbed state of mind at length gave place to a feeling of terror, which came over her with such force as to overpower for the moment her sorrow for the loss of her child. She endeavoured to drive it off, but in vain, and coward-like, she left the room and went up-stairs.

Mrs. Watkins, according to promise, called the next day. The two friends first visited the room in which lay the body of the child, and then they went up-stairs and occupied themselves in preparing Alice's mourning. Mrs. Watkins not leaving her till it was time for her husband to return home.

The day for the funeral arrived, and then for the first time since she had taken the false oath at the coroner's inquest did Alice's maternal affection for her boy return in full force. Her grief was overpowering, and it was with difficulty she could support herself as she followed the child to the grave. Indeed, so overcome was she that Mrs. Watkins, who had been standing by the grave, insisted on taking her home in a cab.

The following morning Alice occupied herself with her domestic affairs. The first thing she did was to place in a drawer by themselves the clothes and little playthings of her child. One by one they were examined as she put them aside, each article calling to her mind some episode connected with it, till she came to the ball. This she placed on the table, and gazed at it for some minutes with feelings of a singular description. She valued it as the favourite plaything of her child, and she dreaded it as the mute witness of her false oath. So great was her terror of it that she one moment thought to destroy it, but the next her better feelings prevailed, and she dismissed the idea.

At length she appeared to have arrived at some definite conclusion, and going to the cupboard, she took from it a pen and ink, and then wrote on the ball in the best way she could the words which the doctor, in my introductory chapter, had read on it, "May God forgive me." She then held the ball to the fire till the ink was quite dry, when, instead of putting it in the drawer with the other toys, she placed it in a bag with those relics she considered especially worthy to keep. Before closing the bag she also added another relic, certainly the dearest of all—a lock of her child's hair, which she had cut

from his head the day before the funeral. She first folded it in a new sheet of writing-paper, and then wrapped round it a piece of black crape, which she had saved purposely from her mourning. The mouth of the bag she now tied up, and then locked it carefully in the box in which she was accustomed to keep her valuables.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

MY FOURTH GREAT TROUBLE.

WITH a saddened heart I left poor Alice Morgan, and entering the cab, drove to Storr and Mortimer's, in Bond Street. On arriving I saw one of their assistants who had formerly been instrumental in getting repaired for me some article of jewellery I had entrusted the firm with—I forget what. He immediately recognised me, and I told him I had brought with me an earring to be repaired; and that he would oblige me by getting it finished as soon as possible, as I might very likely be leaving England in a short time. I then gave him my mother's address in Dover, and told him if he would send down the earring when finished, he should have a post-office order for the amount forwarded him.

I now took from my pocket the little cardboard box, and drew from it its contents; but great was my surprise and terror, when on opening the paper in which I had enfolded the earring, I found it contained only a flat barley-sugar lozenge! For some moments I was completely stupefied, but was somewhat recalled to myself when, on glancing at the assistant, I found he was evidently with great difficulty trying to repress a smile. At first I felt angry with him, and then a sort of bewilderment came over me. I became dizzy, and sank into a chair, and I was half conscious that I was turning deadly pale.

The assistant's behaviour was completely changed, and with much sympathy in his tone and manner, he inquired whether I felt unwell, and whether he could do anything for me. I thanked him, and then the idea coming over me that my conduct must appear incomprehensible, I endeavoured to regain my self-possession. With an absurd attempt at a smile, I told him there had been some mistake, that my little girl had been playing with some lozenges which were enveloped in white paper, and about the same size as that in which I had put the earring, but that I would return home and fetch it. I rose from my chair, wished him good morning, and staggered rather than walked out of the shop, perfectly conscious the while that the eyes of the assistant and others present were following me with no very complimentary glances.

I now entered the cab, and told the man to drive rapidly home. On leaving Alice's house I had resolved to get through my commissions as speedily as possible, so as to arrive home in time to write by that day's post to my mother, telling her of Edmond's return, so that she might not be startled at his sud-

den appearance. Now, all idea of my mother had vanished, and I mentally blamed the slowness of the cabman's pace, so urgent was my wish to reach home and clear up the mystery of the earring. Earnestly did I hope that the explanation I had given at the jeweller's might prove correct, or at any rate that I might by mistake have placed the lozenge in the box. If so I should either find the earring at home, or it had possibly been taken to Derigny's by Martha, and in the latter case what would be the result? I had no reason whatever to doubt Derigny's honesty; on the contrary, we had ample proof that he was worthy of all confidence in that respect, for since he had been in our employ much valuable property had been entrusted to him, and his trust had been most faithfully discharged. The thought then occurred to me, were all his family as well worthy of confidence as himself? I then remembered the hesitation he had shown in speaking of his son, and that I had come to the conclusion that his behaviour had not been altogether satisfactory to his father. If, therefore, the son had obtained possession of the earring, it was more than probable I should never see it again.

I now detected myself in attempting to accuse young Derigny of the theft, though without the slightest data to go upon; nay, more, I was positively forcing myself to believe it already to be a fact. At last my mind reverted for a moment to another conclusion, and this so painful, that leaning out of the window, I insisted angrily on the coachman driving faster, as if wishing by the rapidity of the pace to draw my mind from the thought which had flashed across it. The man endeavoured to explain that his horse was very tired, but I would hear no excuse, and repeated my request that he would drive faster. I then threw myself back in the seat, and the painful thought again came before me—could Edmond be the guilty party? Again and again I argued against the impression that would persistently haunt me, shutting my eyes to the act of dishonesty he had formerly committed; but it was all useless, revert to me it would, and I was obliged to seek relief in that genuine woman's solace—a flood of tears.

At last I arrived at home, where I suppose I must have rung the bell very violently, for scarcely a minute elapsed before Martha opened the door, with a startled and somewhat inquisitive expression on her countenance. I pushed by her without speaking a word, and rushing up-stairs entered the room, and there to my great satisfaction saw the barley-sugar lozenges remaining, some on the table, some on the chimney-piece. I gave a sigh of relief, and commenced examining them one by one; but as I went on my alarm began to return, and when I had finished the whole my sorrow was as profound—possibly more so—than when I entered the room.

I now determined to question Martha on the sub-

ject. Previous to her entering the room I managed to obtain sufficient self-control to see the necessity of not appearing frightened before the girl.

"Martha," I said, "I perceive you have not taken the lozenges to your little godchild; why did you leave them behind?"

"Well, ma'am, I thought that as Mrs. Derigny is coming here this evening to remain till you leave to-morrow, she would very likely bring little Peggy with her, and the lozenges would help to amuse her. I told her there was a treat in store for her when she came, and I left her guessing what it could be."

"And where is Mr. Edmond?" I inquired, my voice trembling as I spoke.

"I don't know I'm sure, ma'am. I wasn't out more than half an hour, and as soon as I came back Mr. Edmond left the house, and hasn't come in again. I reminded him you'd dine at five o'clock."

I stared at the girl for a moment, and then I believe I said, abstractedly, "Quite right, Martha, we will dine at five."

"I hope, ma'am," said Martha, "you'll be able to let me go as soon as dinner is over. My new place is a long way off, and Mrs. Derigny has promised to come round before you go."

"Certainly, Martha, you can go as soon after dinner as you please."

She now left the room, and I sat helpless in my chair, utterly unable to determine what to do. I made some kind of resolution that before I would believe in Edmond's dishonesty I would wait till dinner was ready. By that time I felt convinced all would end well, if not—but the conclusion was too terrible to think of; and there I sat in a state of half torpor, attempting as much as possible to drown all thought till Martha came to the room to lay the cloth for dinner.

"Are you not too early, Martha?" I asked.

"No, ma'am, it only wants five minutes to five o'clock."

"Impossible it can be so late," I said; then taking out my watch, I found it was already five o'clock.

The dinner was placed on the table, and I waited some minutes longer to allow Edmond time to come in. Martha reminded me that the dinner would be getting cold, and roused by the girl's remark I sat down to the table. I attempted to ask a blessing on the food before me. My lips might have said it, but my thoughts were addressed to God in a prayer imploring that my brother might return to me. I endeavoured to put on the appearance of eating, but all in vain—I could not swallow a morsel.

"Leave the things," I said to Martha; "they can remain on the table till Mr. Edmond comes home. You can go now as soon as you please, I will open the door to Mrs. Derigny."

"Oh! she's here already, ma'am, so you needn't trouble about that. Shall I take the lozenges downstairs to little Peggy?"

"No—yes, take them away. No," I said, trying to put on a smile, "put them in the table-drawer for the present, and let the child find them." And this I said with the determination to examine them again.

"Yes, ma'am," said Martha, doing as I told her, "and I'll tell Peggy to search when I'm gone, and that she'll find something she'll like. It will be fine fun for her," continued Martha, as she closed the door after her.

Martha's words, "fine fun for her," kept striking on my ear as if, in the state of sorrow I was in, the very phrase was a bitter mockery. Half an hour afterwards I heard a cab draw up to the door. I started to the window, hoping to see Edmond descend from it. No—it was only Martha, who had fetched it for herself and her luggage, and in a few minutes she came in to bid me good-bye.

Night came on, and Mrs. Derigny brought me in candles—I had not even noticed it was getting dark. Hour after hour passed, but Edmond did not arrive. At last when eleven o'clock came I rang the bell for Mrs. Derigny, and told her to go to bed; and shortly afterwards I heard her and her husband ascend the staircase leading to the attics. I remained till long past midnight, listening with intense anxiety for the sound of the door-bell. At last my hearing became so exquisitely acute that I could as distinctly hear the footsteps of the few passengers who passed the house as if they had been walking in the room, and earnestly did I hope that one among them would stop at our door. No such good fortune; all passed, and with the exception of the solitary policeman on his beat, not a sound more was heard.

I could endure the suspense no longer. I crept stealthily down-stairs, and softly unbarring the street door I gazed out into the square, hoping to see Edmond. For some time no one came, but at last footsteps were heard, and I looked in that direction, when a strong glare of light fell on my face with such intensity as completely to dazzle me. It was only the lantern of a policeman, who now seeing the door open rapidly approached it. I felt some excuse was necessary, and told the man I was expecting my brother home, and could not understand the reason he had not arrived; and to avoid any further remark on his part I retreated into the house, and closed the door after me.

By way of keeping near at hand so as to hear Edmond the moment he arrived, I entered the parlour on the ground floor, where I remained standing, all the furniture having been removed after the sale. The description my mother had given me of finding my poor father in the anxious attitude of prayer the night Edmond absconded from home came vividly before me, till at last I could almost picture the dear old man in his terrible sorrow. Like him I knelt down to pray. But I hardly succeeded, for I almost fancied his spirit was standing by my side, in the

same manner that my dear mother had stood beside him. After rising from my knees, I wandered in the dark about the different rooms, listening attentively for any ring at the door-bell. I went into the drawing-room, and when there recalled to mind the look of intense sorrow my poor father had cast on me the day I visited him after the discovery of Edmond's act of dishonesty with the bank-notes entrusted to him.

In this room I remained till the first rays of dawn appeared, and with them all hopes that I had nourished in the night vanished, and the stern fact that my brother had again absconded after committing a gross act of dishonesty, came before me with all its frightful reality. Morning at last came, and I saw the necessity for concealing, as much as possible, the terrible disgrace which had fallen on me and my dear mother, and I crept noiselessly to my bedroom. Here I remained on my bed till I heard the Derignys leave their room and descend the staircase, when I endeavoured to obliterate as much as possible all marks of sorrow from my countenance. Mrs. Derigny prepared some breakfast for me, and after swallowing a cup of tea—for I could eat nothing—I felt somewhat refreshed. Shortly afterwards I sent for a cab, and then, oppressed with sorrow and sad remembrances, I quitted the house I

had lived in for so many years, never again to return to it.

Nothing particularly worthy of notice occurred during my journey to Dover, where my mother and little daughter received me with great delight. Of course I tried to appear cheerful before my mother but hardly succeeded, though she evidently attributed my sadness to the sorrow I naturally felt at leaving the old house. Of my brother Edmond I said not one word, and was supported in my resolution by the fact that I had given him our address at Dover, and he could write or come there if he pleased. My mother made many inquiries about what had taken place since she left me in town, and among other questions she asked what I had done with the emerald earring. I had already prepared myself with an evasion, which I trust, gentle reader, you will admit to be a venial one.

"I am sorry to say I have lost it, mamma," I said.

"Oh, my dear!" she replied, "I am grieved to hear that, it will spoil the pair. However, it is done now, and cannot be helped. I will give you the other one, and you can do what you like with it." And I treasured it always as a keepsake of my dear mother; it is the one mentioned in the second chapter of my narrative as being found among my relics.

(To be continued.)

SHORT PAPERS ON SHORT TEXTS.

BY THE REV. GORDON CALTHROP, M.A., VICAR OF ST. AUGUSTINE'S, HIGHBURY.

"I will come to you."—John xiv. 18.

IT was a sad moment when the disciples first came to realise their Master's intended departure from them. Of course, they ought to have been prepared for the event. On not a few occasions the Saviour had spoken about his death, and on some of those occasions had entered into the subject with considerable minuteness of detail. But the thought was an unwelcome one, and, somehow or other, the disciples had managed to put it aside. When the announcement came in such a way that they were compelled to confront it, they were overwhelmed with the emotions of a painful and distressing surprise. They were saddened, shocked, startled, almost paralysed. Sorrow took possession of and "filled" their hearts.

There was something very natural about all this, and therefore excusable; but there was something also that was deserving of blame. The disciples were too much occupied with themselves. Had they had more love for their Divine Master, they would have rejoiced in the thought of his returning to the Father, and entering into the glory that was the reward of his toil and suffer-

ings upon earth. Even then, of course, the idea of separation would have been painful; but the feelings it produced would have fallen into the background, and the predominant sentiment would have been one of deep thankfulness and pleasure on their Master's account. As it was, the bearing of this departure on their Master himself seems scarcely to have occurred—or, at least, not to have occurred with any great force and urgency to their minds. They were absorbed in the contemplation of the loss which they themselves would be called upon to sustain when Jesus had left them and returned to the Father.

Now, our Lord touches with a very gentle but significant notice, the fault of which they have been guilty; but, at the same time, flows in with the general current of their thoughts, and consoles them on the very ground which they have taken up for themselves. His departure, he assures them, will not be a loss, but a gain to them. Strange as it may seem to say so, they will be benefited by his leaving them. They cannot bear now the idea of being separated from him, of losing his bodily presence, but they will soon see that—in more ways than one—this very removal will bring incalculable advantage with it. Not only is his

return to the Father the one indispensable condition of the advent of the abiding Comforter, but he himself will come to them, when he has returned to the Father, in a way in which it has not been possible for him to come to them before. This seems to be the meaning of the text: "It is expedient for you that I go away." Why? Because I go away to return to you, and to return to you with a reality, a truth, a power, of which you have no experience, and can have no experience now. The meditation seems a very suitable one just now, and for any time. Let us consider it. Let us consider that Christ, though now removed to the right hand of the Majesty on high, is yet present with his people, by the Spirit; and that his presence is something far more desirable than that which his disciples enjoyed whilst he was with them walking upon earth.

Now, although we have ventured to blame the disciples for a certain degree of selfishness, there can be no question that they were perfectly right in dreading, above all things, separation from their Divine Master. His words seemed to indicate that such a separation was imminent, and therefore it was that they were so greatly distressed. And I think we may allow, too, that in the then state of their spiritual enlightenment, the disciples were not likely to be altogether satisfied and reassured by the promise of the coming of the Comforter. Of this Person—Divine though he was—they knew but little. What he was to do for them, how he was to abide with them, was a mystery. And it did not console them much when they were told that an unseen and unknown Being was to arrive from heaven and take the place of the living, breathing, visible, present, personal Jesus Christ, whom they knew and whom they loved. But the Saviour laid his finger upon their difficulty when he assured them that this coming of the Holy Ghost was, in deed and in truth, *a coming of himself*. He never intended to separate himself from them. No. He was going to draw the bonds of union closer still. It was never in his thoughts to leave them "orphans"—to send them out into an uncongenial and hostile world with no Captain at their head, with no Friend by their side. Far from it. His purpose in departing is—that they shall be able to feel themselves more truly encompassed by his presence, and know themselves more truly entitled to draw upon his resources. Nor is he going to do all this by a deputy. He will not merely *send*—he will *come*. Nor is he coming in a figure only; he is coming in person. "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you."

And these words, of course, are true. The spiritual presence of Christ is something more real and satisfying than his bodily presence—such bodily presence, I mean, as the disciples enjoyed.

In the first place, it was through the advent of the Comforter that the disciples were brought into true appreciation of their Master's person and work, and therefore into true sympathy with him. Actual, visible communication between two beings is worth very little, if they do not understand one another. They may come close, to appearance, and yet be as far asunder, in reality, as the poles are. True coming together begins when there is established between the two the sympathy of love. And there can be no doubt that from the day of Pentecost the feelings of the disciples towards their Divine Master underwent a very remarkable change. Spiritual and intellectual obstructions were thrown down at that time, and there was a coming together on the part of the two which had never been experienced before.

But this was not all. The Spirit of God is he who comes into the closest possible contact with the spirit of man. We know comparatively little about our bodies. They are a mystery to us, after all. But much greater mysteries are those parts of ourselves which we are accustomed to call our "souls." To this mysterious constituent of our complex nature God the Holy Ghost—himself a spirit—approaches. Why should he not? Who shall say he cannot? He enters into, he takes possession of us. He, as it were, intertwines himself and incorporates himself with our being; he dwells in us, and abides in us. *But he does not and he cannot come alone*. He is the Spirit of the Son—the Spirit whom the Son hath sent. He is one with the Son, and, consequently, whenever he comes he brings Christ with him—not, mark you, the knowledge of Christ, not the love of Christ, not the influence of Christ, *but Christ himself*. And the Lord Jesus is thereby drawn into a contact and communion with his people, which is real because it is spiritual, and which is superior to the companionship which the disciples enjoyed during the days of our Lord's earthly ministry, because it satisfies more completely the deepest cravings and necessities of the human heart.

It would have been a sad thing for the Church if Christ had removed himself to a greater distance from his people when he returned to the Father. The longing of the Christian heart is for greater nearness to Christ, for closer intimacy, for more complete communion, for more entire realisation of its oneness with Christ. Surely it would not have been "expedient" to have thwarted this longing, and made the gratification of it a more difficult thing. But when Christ departed to the Father, instead of removing himself to a greater distance from his people, he did, in fact, approach them more closely. He was invisible, it is true. They could no longer look upon the majestic tenderness of his face, or hear the well-known tones of his voice; but in all that constitutes true

spiritual communion the disciples were the better for the coming of the Comforter—for Christ departed was, in effect, Christ nearer, closer, more present, more sustaining, than he had ever been before.

And such is our position now. Christ has come to his people. To realise this the better, think for a moment of any one dear to you who has passed into the unseen world. Can you hold communion with your friend? Can you say that he has "come to you?" You cannot. There are certain things you *can* do. You can think over the past; you can remember his example and profit by it. He has left writings; you can read them, and thus come into contact with his mind and drink into his spirit. But with himself you cannot hold intercourse, at present. There is a gulf between you, which neither of you can overpass, and you must wait for the revelations of the future world before the suspended communication can be again renewed. But far otherwise is it with the Lord Jesus Christ. We have his Word, and we can read it; we have his example, and we can follow it. But more than this; we have *himself*. We can come into actual, living, personal contact with him, and he can become a real presence to us—a presence which makes itself felt. Christians know that, at certain times at least in their lives, Christ does not send to them; he comes—they know that he is with them. It is not grace that is with them; it is not spiritual influence that is with

them; it is *Christ himself that is with them*; and this is the result of the ascension of the Saviour into heaven and of the advent of the Comforter.

Yet must we remember that we look forward to another presence of Christ with his people. Indeed, the ascension itself contains the promise of it; for as the disciples stand on the mount, awestruck yet joyful, gazing after their ascended Lord, seeing now only the lingering traces of the glory into which he has been withdrawn from their view, two men suddenly appear to them in white apparel, and say, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." The ascension thus presupposes and prefigures the second advent of Christ. And to this advent we look forward as the perfect and absolute fulfilment of the Christian's hopes. There is a presence of Christ, then, which is higher than his present spiritual presence. It was much to have the incarnate Son of God living amongst men, teaching, warning, comforting, consoling his disciples. It is more to have him, as we have him now, dwelling in us by his Spirit, maintaining the closest and most intimate communion with his people. But it will be something greater, higher still, when we shall see him as he is, when he shall come again in the great day of his appearing and kingdom, to "receive us unto himself, that where he is, there we may be also."

DAWN AFTER DARK.

"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light."

HER eyes are lost in constant night,
But do not call her blind, for, lo!
She hath a world of inward light
From whence the brightest visions glow

"Thy will be done," she breathed of yore,
When He that gave, saw fit to take
The glorious sense. No vain deplore
Her earthly days unfruitful make.

A cheery smile is on her face,
Upon her cheek a healthy hue,
While from her lip with ease and grace
Trip pleasant words, comes counsel true

Her mind is stored with beauties rare,
Bright records of the passed away;
She knows her old friends as they were,
And marks no traces of decay.

And as the noblest souls will oft
Fly from the world's wild din and glare,

To seek in solitude the soft
Repose, to be found only there:

So, in her solitude of dark,
Reflection sweetest solace brings,
The Dove of promise on her ark
Drops and enfolds its silver wings.

Too wise to waste, too pure to leave
Duty for idlesse, day by day
Her ready fingers work and weave
Raiment for sufferers by the way.

And when stern Winter striding past,
Clad in his suit of icy mail,
Draws forth his sword-like Northern blast,
The weak and fragile to assail,

The toddling child and tott'ring dame
Remember her with grateful love,
And haply breathe her worthy name,
And wait it, with a prayer above.

JOHN G. WATTS.

THE DINGY HOUSE AT KENSINGTON.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ABOUT NELLIE," "THE TROUBLES OF CHATTY AND MOLLY," ETC. ETC.

CHAPTER V.

O Robert Welch those first weeks and months were a long and happy day-dream. He left the house with a light heart in the morning; he did his work with all his might; and in the evening, rejoicing that his day's work was done, impatiently took his way back to the dingy tea-table at which his goddess presided. A man seldom gives himself up to a blind passion of this kind, save when he is very young, and for the first woman who finds an entrance into his heart; when he does, it is perhaps more absorbing and unselfish and complete even than a woman's love: so it was with Robert Welch.

And Polly? Well, she did not know what the love she had won, and the homage she accepted as her natural right, were. She was a woman who liked attention, and took it simply as her due, though until Robert Welch appeared there had been no one to pay it to her. Still she knew instinctively she could command it, and she unconsciously expected, nay, almost exacted it. She wore her best ribbons for him; she adorned herself in all the thousand ways a woman can for a man who never understands details, so that the whole is pleasing to the eye; she sang her favourite songs for him in her sweetest voice, and looked up at him for the admiration he was only too ready to accord; she waited for his coming of an evening with her hair smoothed, and wore a pleased smile upon her face when he appeared. Yet her eyes never turned anxiously to the clock if he chanced to be a little late, and her heart never throbbed one second quicker when she heard his step. She accepted his exaggerated compliments, and put the flower he sometimes brought her home in her dress or in her hair, but she never lingered in thought over his pretty speeches, and the flower was never taken tenderly from its resting-place, and looked at with a smile or a blush and shyly hidden away. The pretty speeches were forgotten, and the flower thrown carelessly on one side when its beauty had faded.

No, she did not fall in love with him, though she had a little sentimental feeling for him, as a woman usually has for the man who first lays siege to her heart, and she thought it pleasant to have some one to talk to, some one who would gladly listen, gravely watching her face, when she felt in the humour to chatter about a thousand things she did not understand, and did not care to gain understanding of—to listen to the music of her voice without troubling to comprehend its theme. There was something gratifying, too, to the girl whose life had been so lonely, who had had no playfellows or schoolgirl friendships, no one to single her out before from

the common rank and file of human beings, to find herself suddenly the chief consideration of some one's life. A woman's nature is so ivyish that she must cling to something, no matter whether it is father or mother, or lover or husband; she must have some one to live within her air castles, some one to whom she mentally sends her most secret thoughts home to roost. So it was with Polly. She had no intention of seriously trying to win Robert Welch's love, or of trifling with him in any way, only she was a woman, and instinctively played off those little airs and graces which are so natural to a pretty one, and she was flattered and pleased, and found it pleasant to be liked and appreciated; to have some one who would neither snub nor slight nor ignore her; some one to think of her, and for her; to listen to her troubles and minister to her pleasures and her vanity; to admire her when at her best, and sympathise with her when she was tired or desponding—that was all. She was no heartless coquette; she knew Robert Welch liked and admired her; it simply never occurred to her that he did more, and if it had she would have been but little disturbed. Love was a mystery she was as yet unable to understand.

"My dear Mary," said Mr. Dawson one morning, in his blandest tone, when, according to his usual custom, he minutely examined the monthly accounts of the household expenditure, "there is surely some mistake here; your expenses are most extravagant, and quite beyond my means."

"I really don't see how," his wife answered pettishly, anxious not to enter upon a subject to which she had a particular objection.

"I must consult Polly if you do not know, my dear," he answered softly; "but it is usually considered the business of the mistress of the house to look after these sort of things."

"So I do, and I am sure I am as careful as possible," she answered angrily. Mrs. Dawson could never calmly discuss any subject in which there was a chance of any blame attaching to herself. "I spend as little as I can; you may ask Mrs. Albury or any one else if it is possible to manage on less than I do."

"Mrs. Albury has nothing to do with this matter, and it is no use your losing your temper, my dear. If I cannot have these matters seen into properly, I must take the reins into my own hands."

"I am sure the reins and everything else are in your hands already. You must ask Polly about the stupid accounts; I know nothing about them," and she left the room, banging that excellent index to a woman's temper, the door, after her.

Mrs. Dawson always tried to make a scene on the



(Drawn by WILLIAM SMALL.)

"The toddling child and tott'ring dame
Remember her with grateful love"—p. 695.

smallest provocation (though her husband's meanness was aggravating), and with the soft answer that turns away wrath she had but the slightest possible acquaintance.

"Go down to your father, Polly," she said to her daughter; "he's making the usual fuss about the housekeeping. I'll write and ask your Aunt Maria if your grandfather ever did such a thing, and I'll tell Mr. Welch this evening, and ask him if his uncle ever makes such a to-do about nothing."

"Hush! mamma, dear," Polly answered soothingly; "you shouldn't be so easily vexed about a trifle. I can soon explain it all."

Then Polly left her mother, preparing to damp her own rage with a shower of tears, and went to her father.

"Papa," she said, "the books are a very little in excess on account of the things you told me I might get for Jack."

"I know—I know," he answered; "but he is much better now; they have done him good, and can be discontinued. I would have you remember through life, Polly, nothing is worse than excess in anything."

"But it is not excess with Jack, I assure you; you should hear him cough sometimes, and see how bright his eyes look."

"Polly," said her father, resolutely keeping shut the door of his heart which had begun to creak on its hinges at the mention of his son's name, "you will coddle that boy up with your old woman ways till a puff of wind will kill him. I won't have it, and that's enough."

Then Mr. Dawson took his hat, and left the house. He dropped his suavity when occasion absolutely required it.

"I told you so," Mrs. Dawson said in the afternoon. "I shan't speak to him again to-day." Mrs. Dawson always sulked like a child after a quarrel. "And I shall tell Mr. Welch of the way in which your father has treated me," she continued indignantly; "and I am sure if I were you, Polly, I'd get Mr. Welch to marry me. You'd be much better off than you are at home, half-starved and grudging every penny piece expended upon you."

"Get Mr. Welch to marry me!" Polly exclaimed, her eyes opening and her cheeks flushing at the suggestion and the way it was put. Get him to marry her! as if whoever had the happiness of some day paying her bills, and devoting his life to her service must not go down on his knees almost and entreat for the honour. "Really, mamma," she said, "you speak as if it would be a favour to marry me, instead of——" and she pouted and stopped.

"Well, you are not such a catch," her mother answered candidly. "Why, I was married when I was a little older than you are; and your father had asked me to run away with him before I was your age; and I heard that old Mr. Brandford of the

Laurels said he didn't wonder at it either. No one ever tried to run away with you."

"No," said Polly, rather regretfully, "no one ever did."

"And I remember when your Aunt Annie married Dr. Phillips, poor George Browne nearly broke his heart about it. Why, no one ever broke his heart for you in your life." Her mother was getting a little contemptuous.

"No," said Polly in the same rather regretful tone, "no one; I only wish some one would. I should feel so deliciously consequential afterwards."

"Then you see," concluded Mrs. Dawson, triumphantly, "you needn't give yourself such airs about Robert Welch. I like him; he's so attentive to me, and he's going to bring me back some flowers and lavender in the summer-time—he said so. Now I shall go and lie down," and she departed, as was her custom, to take an afternoon nap, and Polly sat down in the dining-room easy chair. She liked that easy chair. It was large and roomy and shabby and comfortable, and there was no teasing antimacassar thrown over its back to tumble over her nose if she ventured to lean back, or to tickle her eyes and nose if the worn, rubbed leather arms wooed her to a doze. It was a very dingy house altogether, a house in which there were many shadows and few lights. Still Polly had a liking for it, and she was very fond of that cosy old chair, and she nestled down in it with a feeling of relief when her mother had left the room, and proceeded to think over the aspect of affairs generally.

She thought of Jack first, with his delicate face and hacking cough, and then of her father and mother. She was fond of them; every girl with a pure affectionate nature loves her parents as a matter of course, but Polly, perhaps, loved hers as a matter of course only. Yes, she loved her mother; she was so used to her little fits of temper and vanity, and all the faults which were so more than balanced by the unselfish way in which she was always ready to constitute herself a sacrifice to any one else's convenience, or the generous way in which she would spend her last penny on some addition to Polly's wardrobe, that they strengthened her daughter's affection for her. And then she thought of Robert Welch. It was nearly three months now since he first came (it only wanted ten days to Christmas), and those three months had but slightly altered her feelings towards him. She liked him very much, but she only *liked* him; she had grown used to him, and he amused her, though he did not interest her—that was all. Every lock has its own particular key, and the one which opened the door of her heart Robert Welch did not as yet possess. She wondered at herself for not caring more about him.

"Robert" (she had soon learnt to call him by his Christian name) "is so good and kind and good-natured," she thought; "but I suppose one never does

get really desperate nowadays excepting in books. I don't think I am very affectionate either. I love my mother and Jack, but I don't care very much for any one else. I like Robert, but I'm certain I shouldn't cry my eyes out if I never saw him again."

The fact is, a woman is so like a sunflower. Just as that flower turns its face to the sun, so a woman must look up to a man thoroughly to love him; and if he is not worthy of this in himself, he must possess attributes which will admit of her idealising him into anything she pleases. Half the love in the world is laid down at the shrine of ideality, especially by women; they create an idea, and fancy it a human being. But Robert Welch was not a good peg for an idea. An ideal never wears a woollen comforter round his neck (Polly had not forgiven that crime yet), and talks of having a weak chest, or sits in a merchant's office all day, and does sums, and whistled of an evening as he did (save when he looked at Polly); neither was he clever, or wonderful enough in any way for her to love him without the idealism which absolutely refused to give him shelter. She never thought of asking his opinion on anything she was doubtful about, still less of taking it. She did not even care for his admiration; it was too lavish, too unfeeling, too indiscriminate to be worth striving to gain. She thirsted for praise she had honestly to earn, and eyes whose approving glances she would value because they were not blind to her faults.

She sighed a little, for she felt there was a possibility of her being Robert Welch's wife (though as yet he had not asked her), and she felt too that the love she had read of in the romantic stories her mother delighted in, it was possible to wake in her own heart, though probably it would slumber there for ever. She liked Robert Welch, but she wouldn't care if he married some one else to-morrow; at least, she didn't think she should, though she didn't much relish the idea of his doing so. No woman ever did feel herself securely seated on the throne of a man's heart, and enjoy the idea of coming down-stairs again. She is very sorry if she cannot return the compliment and give him an equally elevated position in her heart, she is more sorry still if he pines and grieves and strives with all his might to gain what he cannot win. Yes, she is very sorry for him indeed, and she will do anything in the world for him, but—she rather likes it.

"Good gracious me!" exclaimed Polly, suddenly jumping up, "why there's a double knock, whoever can it be?" She hid herself behind the curtain, and looked out of window. "Well, I declare, it's those horrid Alburys come in a brougham; wonder if they've suddenly set one up, or hired it. Won't mamma be vexed, if it's their own!" She opened the dining-room door gently, told the servant in a stage whisper to show them into the drawing-room, and went to rouse her mother.

"What a bother to be sure," Mrs. Dawson said;

"give me my crimson shawl, I'll wrap it round me and say I have a cold, then they won't see my shabby dress. You come down too, Polly, I never know what to talk about by myself. I wonder what that Miss Albury came with her mother for. I wish to goodness people would keep their distance." Then Mrs. Dawson, with a clean pocket-handkerchief in her hand and a set smile on her face, went into the drawing-room and told her visitors how pleased she was to see them, it was quite an age since they had been to see her, she really had wondered what had become of them.

After a few moments Polly entered, obviously with her hair just smoothed, and her hands still pinky from the effects of very recent soap and water. Margaret Albury rose as she entered, and ceased taking a mental survey of the room. She rather admired Polly.

"Did you not come from the North of England, Mrs. Dawson?" Mrs. Albury asked, "I think I have heard you say so."

"Yes, my poor father was the clergyman of Benthwaite for a great many years." Mrs. Dawson always diplomatically used the word "clergyman," and so veiled the fact that the curate had possessed neither interest nor eloquence to procure a living—and mere earnestness and goodness are seldom strong recommendations in this world.

"We have had a visitor from that part of the world lately—a Mr. Brandford; do you know him?"

"Oh dear me! yes, I used to know the family well, and went to their parties before—like a great many other foolish young people—Mr. Dawson and I made a runaway match of it;" and she looked at her daughter, which that young lady thought rather hard, for she had not the slightest chance of making a runaway or any other match. "Which Brandford is it? there are two families of them. The older branch is the poorer one, and only consists now of Mrs. Brandford and her son, the old gentleman died last year."

"Ah, then it is this son who is our visitor—Mr. Richard Brandford of the Laurels."

"Then there are the Brandfords of Derwent Hollow. They are the younger branch, but much richer, I believe, for Mr. Felix Brandford—he must be an old gentleman too now, though he was some years younger than his brother at the Laurels—was a clever barrister, a Q.C., and all sorts of things."

"I see you know all about them," Mrs. Albury remarked, a shade vexed.

"Well, yes, that is a natural consequence of the position my father held in Benthwaite. How did you know young Brandford?"

"Very easily. He went to the office on some business with your husband and became friendly with mine, who asked him home to dine and see his books. Mr. Albury is proud of his library you know, and Mr. Brandford is quite a bookworm."

"Dear me! I shouldn't have thought it;" and she added mentally, "how stupid of Henry not to have invited him here, he would have come just as soon as to those stuck-up Alburies."

"You must dine with us one day, Mrs. Dawson, and meet him. He has gone to the North now, but returns to town immediately after Christmas." She wanted to provoke Mrs. Dawson by exhibiting her intimacy with one of those people whom she had held in life-long reverence. "I will ask you and Mr. Dawson, and your daughter if she will come, when he returns. I think we must be going. Have you seen my brougham, Mrs. Dawson? I have just coaxed my husband into establishing it. You should do the same by yours."

"Well, really I don't care about it," Mrs. Dawson answered, trying to look unconcerned, but bursting with jealousy, and thinking that trying to coax Mr. Dawson to spend any money he could possibly help, when he had once earned it, would be very much like trying to coax a cat to let a fine fat mouse just caught trot back to its hole.

"Perhaps you have not been used to one. You see papa always kept one for us at home, and I have missed it so during my married life."

"Yes, that is the best of the medical profession, even a surgeon can afford his brougham. My sister, Mrs. Phillips—her husband is a doctor—only remarked to me in her last letter what a comfort she found it." And Mrs. Dawson looked straight into her visitor's face, feeling that she had paid back the little bit of brag with interest.

"The idea of their asking Mr. Brandford there," Mrs. Dawson said, when she had watched the brougham

she did not care about quite out of sight. "They only invite us to dinner to show off, I know that; but I'll let them see that we were somebodies at Benthwaite, for Richard Brandford is sure to remember me." Then she considered that it was necessary to propitiate her husband, in order to keep him good-humoured, so that he might not invent an excuse to prevent their dining at the Albury's, which he would be sure to do if he thought it likely to cost anything.

"That Miss Albury is very plain," she said, continuing her remarks, "she's so sallow, and she's six-and-twenty if she's a day. Polly, mind you make yourself look nice if you go there to dine. Richard Brandford may fall in love with you, who knows? I think you are very like what I used to be; I really should not be surprised if he's struck with you;" and Mrs. Dawson proceeded to build a castle in the air, which, if it had not a Snowdon for a foundation, had at any rate hope for an excellent corner-stone.

"Oh, mamma dear! how can you talk such nonsense! you fancy every one is going to be 'struck' with me. I don't suppose Mr. Brandford will even look at me;" feeling tolerably certain all the time that he would look at her. Polly was a vain little minx—all pretty women are, only some are clever enough to cloak their vanity. She was not conceited, mind; there is a great deal of difference between the two: a conceited woman is detestable; a vain one only natural.

"Fall in love with me!" she said to herself that evening, as she pondered over her mother's words, "I am quite sure he won't."

(To be continued.)

THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.—III.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE BOOK AND ITS STORY."

BIBLE WORK IN THE CRIMEA AND IN ITALY.

IT is said that Pope Pius IX. is accustomed to trace all his recent calamities and those of his Church to the upheavals and political revolutions of the year 1848. The most marvellous event in that wonderful year, to those who were studying the history of the universal Church of God, was the appearance of the edict of Charles Albert, King of Sardinia, declaring the long-persecuted Vaudois *free* subjects, and their "Church in the Valleys" a free church.

Till the 17th of February, 1848, these his loyal subjects had been shut up in their three valleys of Savoy, beyond which they dared not possess a foot-breadth of land. Outside their own narrow bounds they might neither build a sanctuary nor even bury their dead.

But still the Lamp of the Alps went not out. The beautiful symbol of the Waldensian Church

was a "burning lamp surrounded with the seven stars," which signified the lamp of God's Word, and the seven churches scattered over their hills. These were called the "Vaudois candles," and their every stone may be said to have been cemented with the blood of martyrs, and up to 1848 the people, a mere remnant of their former selves, dwelt around Monte Viso—the mountain, unlike every other, which is the beacon of their three valleys—basing on the Bible, as they had always done, their antagonism towards the Papacy.

But in 1848 all these disabilities came to an end. The King of Sardinia—apparently of his own free will, but doubtless influenced of God—granted at last to these martyrs of many centuries a full participation in all the civil and political rights enjoyed by the other subjects of his realm, even to that of returning a member to his parliament. *M. Malan* was that member.

The Lord had set free his ancient Vaudois

Church in his own time, and he had raised up instruments to prepare it for its freedom. General Beckwith, who had been one of the resident benefactors of the Vaudois for more than a quarter of a century, had erected and endowed a hundred schools within their territory, and had circulated thousands of copies of the Gospel among them, published by the British and Foreign Bible Society. The previous apostolic visits of Felix Neff had refreshed and revived their spiritual estate, while he taught them at the same time to make the most of their fruitful though limited possessions. General Beckwith also, who lavished his life and his fortune alike in their favour, hated mendicancy as the greatest plague of society, and was never known to give a farthing to a beggar. This good old English veteran banished beggary from the Waldensian districts, and introduced afresh among them education, thrift, and cleanliness.

It seems that he had even more in view than his first apparent aim, to uphold and comfort these few thousand mountaineers of a noble descent; and that his desire was the regeneration of all Italy, and to prepare the Waldenses to preach and write and bring the Word of God home to the consciences of all their countrymen when the Italian nation should awake once more to its moral independence. The population of the Vaudois valleys at the time of their emancipation was only about 20,000 persons.

In 1849 Lieutenant Graydon, the agent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, opened a room in Turin, and advertised a sale of Testaments in French and Italian in a Turin newspaper; 1,000 copies were purchased in a few days. He remained selling from nine in the morning to nine in the evening. Some priests and monks bought copies, several Jews purchased, and wished much to have the Old Testament; but having no choice, they purchased the New. A *dépôt* was left in the hands of M. Milan, a Vaudois of Latour, who promised to send two colporteurs at once through the valleys. Hostilities were at this time about to commence against Austria, and all Savoy was in a state of great suspense.

A later record is: "Let us thank God for the 20,000 copies of the Word spread through Piedmont and Savoy. They are fast fretting away the warp and the woof of the awful deception of Romanism. The far-famed parishes of the Vaudois are now well furnished with Bibles, and every care is taken to continue the supply. They are training the pastors who shall evangelise Italy—as their forefathers were the parents—through their MS. Bibles, of almost every reformed community in Europe. It is this high ancestry that makes the era of their recent deliverance so important an event."

Meanwhile the Princes of Savoy for three centuries past had drilled their people into an army, and

the events of 1848 suddenly dignified that army into a people. In the question concerning Russia and her extinction of Turkey as a ruling power, Sardinia adhered to the views of England and France, and as one with the allied armies, undertook to send 15,000 men to the Crimea, while the allied fleets entered the Black Sea.

It seemed very strange at the time for Protestant England to unite with Roman Catholic France and Sardinia to defend a Mohammedan nation; but however that may have been, it was overruled of God to ensure a wondrously wide distribution of his Word among the soldiers of the allied armies, especially those of Sardinia; and an influence was by that war given to England on behalf of Protestant subjects of the Porte, to secure to them perfect liberty of religious opinion, and also to obtain freedom of conscience and the power of changing their religion for the Turks themselves.

This influence has been recently tested, and the Sultan is found to continue faithful to his *Hatti Scheriff*, or new law, and faithful to his treaty with England through her honoured ambassador, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe—honoured to obtain a freedom for the Bible, unknown in the land of the False Prophet since the hour that linked together the power of the Koran and the sword—a freedom which included within its bounds as great a deliverance for the ancient Armenians and Nestorian Churches of the East, in Persia, Kurdistan, and Armenia—the lands of the exile of ancient Israel, B.C. 721—as had been conceded to the Vaudois of the West.

Not even Germany or America officially interfere in behalf of Protestant subjects of the Porte, but England still claims, and exercises at a distance of eighteen years from that day, the right of insisting on religious toleration throughout the dominions of the Sultan.

At this point our subject radiates into such varied lines of interest that it is extremely difficult to know how to compress any graphic notice of either into our very limited space. We must first continue the notice of Sardinia. The Scriptures distributed by colportage in Piedmont between 1848 and 1853 seem to have created an ardent longing for more copies. War did its cruel work, and the soldiers were found in the Sardinian hospital; then followed good news like this from the Crimea, and from Sellars and Matheson "the soldiers' missionaries"—"Many officers and soldiers have visited us from the Sardinian hospital at Yenikoi, on the Bosphorus, asking for Bibles; many of them scarce able to walk from their wounds; officers side by side with their soldiers, seeking for the same treasure; those who had obtained Testaments last year desiring to have Bibles. The first day 700 soldiers came, and day

by day the house was besieged, and, alas! hundreds left, empty-handed. We heard of prejudice softened, opposition silenced, and many who had truly beheld the Lamb of God, and when in their last hours urged to confess to the priests, had replied, 'We have confessed to Christ; he alone can save. All our hope is in him.'

There is surely cause for deepest gratitude when we think that 18,000 copies of the Scriptures have gone back to Piedmont from the Crimea alone. "I have never seen a work," says Duncan Matheson, "so thoroughly finished as the distribution of the Scriptures in the Sardinian

army; the future result will probably exceed anything we can at present conceive."

And that morning-dawn in North Italy has brightened. There came a day—the 25th of September, 1860—whose greatest wonder, said a correspondent of the *Times*, is this—that the Bible and the New Testament are just now exposed for sale in the Toledo. Diodati's Bibles selling in the streets of Naples! Not one in a thousand of the Neapolitans had ever seen a Bible! It is true, vast numbers could not have read it if they had, and certainly not one woman in a hundred. *(To be concluded.)*

THE WAVES' REBUKE.

I STOOD on a lonely shore,
Watching the foaming sea.
And thought, in their angry roar,
The waves were rebuking me,
For I, in my secret heart,
Upbraided the cruel sea,
And its cold unfeeling waves,
That parted my love from me.

Said the waves, "We've borne the youth
You love safe o'er the sea."
I knew that the waves spake truth,
By a thrill my heart gave me.
"But over the rocking breast
Of the ever-heaving sea
Your lover must sail again,
Or never return to thee."

Said I, "Let thine anger cease,
I'll ne'er upbraid thee more;
Oh, bring my lover in peace,
But here, to this island shore."
Said they, "'Tis the truant wind
That ruffles the slumb'ring sea;
Be constant in heart and mind,
And all will be well with thee.

"Address thy thoughts to the Pow'r
That rules both wind and wave,
Who sees in the darkest hour,
Whose own right arm can save."
My heart had begun to fail,
When, looking across the sea,
I knew, by the snow-white sail,
My love had returned to me.

W. G.

FATHER'S LETTER.

CHAPTER IV.

FATHER," Mary said, as her father the next morning was starting for his day's work, "when you go to see Mrs. Carp this afternoon, be sure to bring your little Letter home with you; I shall be thinking of her while you are away."

"Ay, do think of her, Mary dear," Mr. Johnstone answered; "and, Mary," he added, stepping back again to her bedside, "we must try and comfort her, poor little thing, and tell her about the Friend of whom I fear she knows so little, and about our heavenly Father's home."

"Ah, yes, father, I should like to talk to her about that. I should like her to love God and look forward to his bright happy home, as she does to that one in New Zealand, and to love God's Letter as dearly as she does her father's."

"I am afraid, Mary, she does not know much about God's letter," and Mr. Johnstone, kissing his

little daughter affectionately, placed the sweet flowers he had gathered closer to her, and then left her to a long patient day of thinking and reading, the stillness of which was seldom broken except by occasional visits from the servant, and from the doctor who had attended her since the sad accident happened which had laid her crippled on her bed, and which seemed now to be gradually sapping away her life too.

She did not find the time very long though; her flowers, her books, and her thoughts kept her company, and she could watch the swallows as they swooped up and down past her window, and hear the sweet singing of the birds in the wood below.

The day was bright and warm, quite different from the day before, and the sun was shining out brightly, lighting up Walbridge pleasantly.

It shone down kindly on little Allie in the afternoon, as she trotted along beside her kind friend, who, after his work was finished, had, true to his

promise, turned his steps towards Mrs. Carp's house, and there, with Allie standing quite happy and satisfied beside him, had discussed with her aunt all the possibilities there were that this important little letter might be sent to New Zealand, and then he had got leave to take her home with him to see his daughter Mary.

The New Zealand plans were not settled so easily, but it was finally decided that Mr. Johnstone should try to find out some one going over to whom the child could be entrusted, and as there was a fortnight before the ship by which her father would expect her was to start, he was in great hopes of being able to succeed.

If only they could find a trustworthy person to whom she could be entrusted during the passage, all the difficulty would be settled, for once in New Zealand, Allie would be sure of a loving welcome and tender care, not only from her father but from her uncle and aunt.

Allie was quite sure Mr. Johnstone would succeed in his search, but she wondered a little to herself whether he had always to look out for some one going to New Zealand, when he had letters to send over.

She did not say much, as she ran beside him to his home, for she was a little shy and frightened at the thought of going to pay a visit to Mary, and she listened very quietly as he told her about the swallows which had built their nest over her window, and of the pretty stories she could tell, and how she lay there all day almost alone, and would be so glad to have a little thing like Allie to come in and chatter to her.

"And she has a letter, as well as you, Allie," he added, "which is very dear to her. She has been asked in it to go to a very beautiful home, and one in which there is neither death nor sorrow; and there are such words of love and tenderness in the letter that Mary loves to read them, and to think of that fair and lovely home. You must ask her to tell you about it, Allie."

Allie only answered, "Yes, sir;" for she felt shyer than ever.

Presently she asked very simply, "Please, sir, who's going to take her there?"

A happy smile crossed Mr. Johnstone's face as he said, "A very dear Friend is going to take her, little one. The letter says He is preparing a place for her, and when it is ready He will come and take her there."

"Will you be all alone then, sir?" Allie said, in a tone of great pity; "won't you miss her?"

"Yes, little one, I shall miss her sadly for a time; but the same Friend has promised to take me to His beautiful home too, some day; and in the meantime I shall not be alone, for He will be with me. He has said in His letter, 'I will not leave you comfortless, I will come unto you.'"

"I wish somebody would write me a letter like

that," Allie said softly, as she stopped in the garden of the pretty cottage, while Mr. Johnstone gathered a handful of the pure white lilies to take into Mary.

Allie thought as she looked at Mary as she lay back so white and fragile on her pillow, smiling at her father and herself as they entered, that she was very like one of the sweet lilies herself, and when she heard her voice saying so kindly, "I am so very glad, little Allie, you have come to see me," all her fears vanished, and she felt Mary was not a bit more formidable than Mr. Johnstone was, whom she looked upon now quite as an old friend.

Mary asked her to come close to the bed, and pointed out the spot where the swallows had built their nest some weeks before, under the thatched roof; and then she made her take off her hat and cloak, and gave her a pretty white vase to arrange the lilies in. This was just what Allie liked.

Mary watched with pleasure the small face dimpled into smiles, as Allie buried it now and then in among the flowers; and Mr. Johnstone seeing them both look so happy, said he would leave them for an hour to amuse each other, and then they would all have tea on the table beside Mary's bed before Allie went home.

(To be concluded.)

"THE QUIVER" BIBLE CLASS.

269. Subsequent to the contention between Paul and Barnabas recorded in Acts xv., the latter is mentioned but once in the Epistles. Where?

270. There are five actual earthquakes alluded to in the Bible. Where?

271. We read of one of the kings of Judah having caused a number of his enemies to be cast down from the top of a rock. Give the occasion.

272. Quote the only passages in which the Messiah is called "The Holy One."

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON PAGE 671.

255. 1 Kings xi. 31.

256. That of Abel, when he offered "the firstlings of his flock and the fat thereof" (Gen. iv. 4).

257. "Because they met not the children of Israel with bread and with water, but hired Balaam against them" (Neh. xiii. 2).

258. "Surely the bitterness of death is past" (1 Sam. xv. 32).

259. Shimei dwelt in Jerusalem "many days" (1 Kings ii. 38); the next verse says he "was there" "three years." Saul remained in Damascus "many days" after his conversion (Acts ix. 23); and from Gal. i. 18 it appears he was there "three years."

260. (1) He made a molten calf (Exod. xxxii. 1); (2) he joined Miriam in rash complaints against Moses (Numb. xii. 1); (3) he displayed a want of faith at Meribah (Numb. xx. 12).

261. Deut. xxiv. 6.

262. Acts vi. 9; xviii. 24; xxvii. 6.

BIBLE NOTES.

THE HID TREASURE (Matt. xiii. 44).

THE kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field." The wise man of old compared the search after knowledge to the search after hid treasures, and

He who was greater than Solomon compared the kingdom of heaven to treasure hid in a field: the one said that he who found the treasure found the knowledge of God; the other, that he who found it sacrificed everything else that he was possessed of in order that he might make it his own.

We know that in countries which are in a disturbed state, either from internal dissensions or from the presence or expected advance of an enemy, men often hide their riches in the ground and go their way, hoping that when affairs get settled once more, and things go on in the old way, and they themselves return to their respective localities, they shall easily recover possession of them. Sometimes they do return, but all accurate recollection of the place where they buried their treasures has vanished completely from their minds, and they cannot find them; sometimes they do not return at all, and no one else knows of the gold hid in the earth. In either case it lies concealed, till the spade of the digger or the plough of the ploughman, working up the soil for the reception of seeds, suddenly strikes upon the hidden treasure, and exposes it to the wondering and delighted gaze of the fortunate peasant, who may thus in a moment see the way open before him for becoming rich from being poor. So, too, many a man, by what he considers a fortuitous circumstance, has found a treasure when he was not seeking for it—he has found that God loves him, and has placed at his disposal the means of becoming rich in all good works. Though he may regard this as a mere stroke of chance, it is nevertheless the act of an overruling Providence, who has guided his steps and directed his actions, that led him to unexpected blessings. How little (to take but one example) did Paul imagine, when he set out on his mission of persecution to Damascus, that he was destined to have his mad career stopped short, and himself transformed from a sinner into a saint! The treasure was found by him who sought it not, and his eyes were opened to see blessings ready at his hand that he little dreamed of.

If we regard the field as the Holy Scriptures, then there can be no doubt that Christ is the treasure hid in them; and when he is discovered there, a man, unless he be very careless and indifferent about heavenly things, will forego much—nay, all that he holds most dear—in order that he may secure complete possession of such a treasure. Paul said that

he counted all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus. Many have followed and will still follow his example; they will renounce everything which can possibly hinder them from pressing forward to the mark of the prize, when once its value has fairly attracted their attention.

"The which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field." The man in this parable, having made his discovery, covers the treasure up carefully, no doubt marking the spot so that he should not have much difficulty in finding it on his return, having completed his purchase. This cannot mean that the man who has found Christ is not to tell any one of what has befallen him; rather does it mean that he who has unexpectedly found him retires, as it were, within himself—gives up everything that can possibly draw him away from his treasure—parts with sinful pleasures—denies himself those earthly enjoyments which stand in the way on his heavenward march—sacrifices those things which have ever been most valuable in his eyes, if only he sees that they prevent him from having what he knows may be his—works out his own salvation, and then, when he is certain that he has found a Deliverer, he goes and tells others with whom he comes in contact of the prize that he has won. It is joy at the discovery that impels him forward, and constrains him to endeavour to make others sharers in his exultation with himself.

If I buy a field, and to do so part with all that I possess, and then am constantly seen working in this field, digging it up and searching with all diligence for what *I know* is to be found, lookers on, who know not my motive, will say either that I am mad, or else that there must be something there which so engrosses my time and attention; and if they continue their observations long enough, they will see that my labour is not in vain. Having got possession of this treasure it is the duty of every man to let it be known far and wide that he has found what all may have, what all shall have if only they search for it; that though he lighted on his treasure accidentally, when he was not actually on the look out for it, there is no reason for their waiting long in the hope that a similar accident may reveal to them the riches which are in Christ Jesus, our Lord, but that they should, on the contrary, now that they know that there is a treasure to be had for the seeking of it, strain every nerve, put forth every effort, and leave nothing undone (placing all their trust in God alone) to win Christ, and to be found in him.